

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARVIN DRESSLER AND TED SALLEE: A CONTRIBUTION TO A SURVEY OF LIFE IN CARSON VALLEY, FROM FIRST SETTLEMENT THROUGH THE 1950S

Interviewee: Marvin Dressler and Ted Sallee

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Description

During the second and third decades of the twentieth century, the Washoe occupants of Carson Valley began deserting homes on property owned by ranchers who employed them to congregate on land south of Gardnerville—the so-called colony of Dresslerville, forty acres set aside for them by William Dressler in 1917. There were accompanying changes in their way of life. In return for having a place of their own, they chose to give up gardens, fruit trees and immediate access to the bounties of nature that were often available on the fertile, irrigated ranch lands: Dresslerville is on a sandy, sagebrush plateau.

Marvin Dressler and Ted Sallee were born in 1919 and 1920, respectively, to Washoe families living on land owned by non-Indians. By the 1930s both families had relocated in the Dresslerville colony. In this 1984 interview Mr. Dressler and Mr. Sallee remember their youth in Carson Valley, concentrating on the pre-World War II days. There are also descriptions of their birthplaces, a particularly detailed picture being provided by Marvin Dressler of his family home on the site of the nineteenth-century Laverone homestead.

As time passed, social relationships between the Washoe and non-Indians underwent changes. Mr. Dressler and Mr. Sallee recall incidents and personalities that are representative of a vanished era. While individual ranchers are spoken of with respect and admiration, both men are critical of certain social customs that once prevailed. Among those discussed are the Minden-Gardnerville curfew for Washoe, the denial of access to dining rooms in restaurants, the segregation of theaters, and the differential enforcement of local laws. The reader will also find brief descriptions of traditional Washoe gathering places in the valley, complete, in some cases, with their Washoe names. This interview is a significant addition to a growing body of information from the Washoe people about their life in Carson Valley since white contact.

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An Oral History Conducted by R.T. King

University of Nevada Oral History Program

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PREFACE TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

Established in 1964, the University of Nevada Oral History Program (UNOHP) explores the remembered past through rigorous oral history interviewing, creating a record for present and future researchers. The program's collection of primary source oral histories is an important body of information about significant events, people, places, and activities in twentieth and twenty-first century Nevada and the West.

The UNOHP wishes to make the information in its oral histories accessible to a broad range of patrons. To achieve this goal, its transcripts must speak with an intelligible voice. However, no type font contains symbols for physical gestures and vocal modulations which are integral parts of verbal communication. When human speech is represented in print, stripped of these signals, the result can be a morass of seemingly tangled syntax and incomplete sentences—totally verbatim transcripts sometimes verge on incoherence. Therefore, this transcript has been lightly edited.

While taking great pains not to alter meaning in any way, the editor may have removed false starts, redundancies, and the “uhs,” “ahs,” and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled; compressed some passages which, in unaltered form, misrepresent the chronicler's meaning; and relocated some material to place information in its intended context. Laughter is represented with [laughter] at the end of a sentence in which it occurs, and ellipses are used to indicate that a statement has been interrupted or is incomplete...or that there is a pause for dramatic effect.

As with all of our oral histories, while we can vouch for the authenticity of the interviews in the UNOHP collection, we advise readers to keep in mind that these are remembered pasts, and we do not claim that the recollections are entirely free of error. We can state, however, that the transcripts accurately reflect the oral history recordings on which they were based. Accordingly, each transcript should be approached with the

same prudence that the intelligent reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information. All statements made here constitute the remembrance or opinions of the individuals who were interviewed, and not the opinions of the UNOHP.

In order to standardize the design of all UNOHP transcripts for the online database, most have been reformatted, a process that was completed in 2012. This document may therefore differ in appearance and pagination from earlier printed versions. Rather than compile entirely new indexes for each volume, the UNOHP has made each transcript fully searchable electronically. If a previous version of this volume existed, its original index has been appended to this document for reference only. A link to the entire catalog can be found online at <http://oralhistory.unr.edu/>.

For more information on the UNOHP or any of its publications, please contact the University of Nevada Oral History Program at Mail Stop 0324, University of Nevada, Reno, NV, 89557-0324 or by calling 775/784-6932.

Alicia Barber
Director, UNOHP
July 2012

ORIGINAL PREFACE

The University of Nevada Oral History Program (OHP) engages in systematic interviewing of persons who can provide firsthand descriptions of events, people and places that give history its substance. The products of this research are the tapes of the interviews and their transcriptions.

In themselves, oral history interviews are not history. However, they often contain valuable primary source material, as useful in the process of historiographical synthesization as the written sources to which historians have customarily turned. Verifying the accuracy of all of the statements made in the course of an interview would require more time and money than the OHP's operating budget permits. The program can vouch that the statements were made, but it cannot attest that they are free of error. Accordingly, oral histories should be read with the same prudence that the reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries and other sources of historical information.

It is the policy of the OHP to produce transcripts that are as close to verbatim

as possible, but some alteration of the text is generally both unavoidable and desirable. When human speech is captured in print the result can be a morass of tangled syntax, false starts and incomplete sentences, sometimes verging on incoherency. The type font contains no symbols for the physical gestures and the diverse vocal modulations that are integral parts of communication through speech. Experience shows that totally verbatim transcripts are often totally unreadable and therefore a total waste of the resources expended in their production. While keeping alterations to a minimum the OHP will, in preparing a text:

- a. generally delete false starts, redundancies and the uhs, ahs and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled;

- b. occasionally compress language that would be confusing to the reader in unaltered form;

- c. rarely shift a portion of a transcript to place it in its proper context; and

- d. enclose in [brackets] explanatory information or words that were not uttered

but have been added to render the text intelligible.

There will be readers who prefer to take their oral history straight, without even the minimal editing that occurred in the production of this text; they are directed to the tape recording.

Copies of all or part of this work and the tape recording from which it is derived are available from:

The University of Nevada
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INTRODUCTION

During the second and third decades of the twentieth century, the Washo occupants of Carson Valley began deserting homes on property owned by ranchers who employed them to congregate on land south of Gardnerville—the so-called colony of Dresslerville, 40 acres set aside for them by William Dressler in 1917. There were accompanying changes in their way of life. In return for having a place of their own, many chose to give up gardens, fruit trees and immediate access to the bounties of nature that were often available on the fertile, irrigated ranch lands: Dresslerville is on a sandy, sagebrush plateau.

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Dressler of his family home on the site of the nineteenth century Laverone homestead.

As time passed social relationships between the Washo and non-Indians underwent changes. Mr. Dressler and Mr. Sallee recall in these pages incidents and personalities that are representative of a vanished era. While individual ranchers are spoken of with respect and admiration, both men are critical of certain social customs that once prevailed. Among those discussed are the Minden Gardnerville curfew for Washo, the denial of access to dining rooms in restaurants, the segregation of theaters and the differential enforcement of local laws. In addition the reader will also find brief descriptions of traditional Washo gathering places in the valley, complete, in some cases, with their Washo names.

Both Marvin Dressler and Ted Sallee displayed an active interest in the history and culture of their people and a willingness to have it recorded for the edification of future generations. Unfortunately, Ted Sallee passed away in September, 1984. The interview to

which he contributed is a significant addition to a growing body of information from the Washo people about their life in Carson Valley since white contact.

A NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY

The Washo words in this text have been transcribed by William H. Jacobsen, Jr., in the phonemic system he has developed for this language. Professor Jacobsen is the acknowledged authority on Washo linguistics and has published a number of works on the subject.

An explanation of the symbols, which have standard Americanist values, is on file at the University of Nevada Oral History Program. Among the more commonly used symbols that may be unfamiliar to non-linguists:

The acute accent indicates a stressed syllable.

š sounds like sh in ship.

ŋ sounds like ng in sing

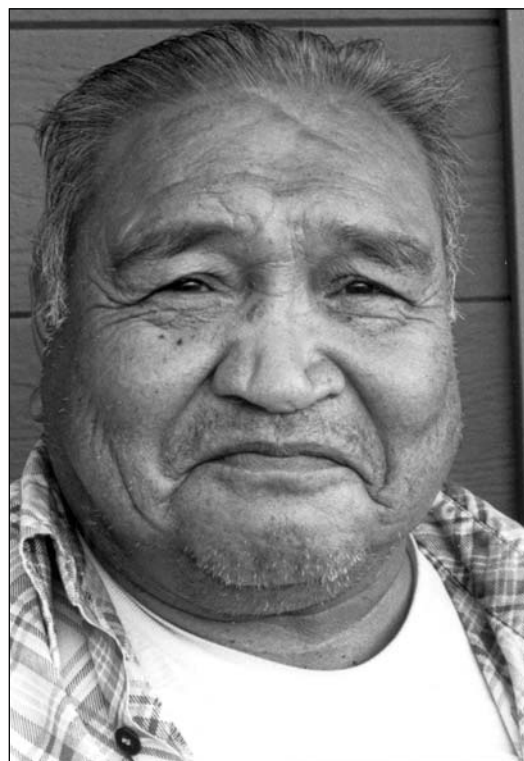
◁ is the symbol for the glottal stop, a quick catch in the throat. It is important to discriminate this very common Washo sound.

v sounds somewhat like u in just.

z sounds like dz in adze.



MARVIN DRESSLER
1984



TED SALLEE
1984

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARVIN DRESSLER AND TED SALLEE

R. T. King: There are a number of topics that I want to discuss with you today. we're going to be talking about Laverone, about how Indians got along with non-Indians here in Gardnerville, about various legends—a lot of things like that. But before we get started on that, I need to get a little biographical information from you.

Ted Sallee: I was born right here in Douglas County in or about Minden, somewhere there about 1920; it was October 23.

Do you know about where your home was located at that time? If you had to place it in relation to today's buildings, where would it be?

S: It would be down east of Minden, east of the railroad track. There used to be a railroad there at one time. East of there in the willows.. .that's where most of the Indians used to live. I mean that's the way they lived. They lived wherever they worked, where old people worked.

Did your father work back there?

S: Yes, he worked for Heise Land and Livestock Company.

And that was their land out there that you were born on?

S: No, my mother stayed there, and he'd go back and forth. He had a Model T Ford, and he'd go back and forth from there to there. That's the way he come to work every day. That's about all I know about him.

What was his name?

S: Tom Sallee.

Did he have an Indian name, Washo name?

S: His real name, I come to think of it now, was Jack Nye. That's what his name was when he went to school in Stewart when it first opened up in the 1800s.

But he changed his name to Tom Sallee?

S: Yes, some reason; I don't know why, because he never explained it to me.

Yes. Did he have a Washo name?

S: Not that I know of.

Marvin Dressler: *Méwew*.

S: Oh, yes—*Méwew*.

D: It means that...like, if you leave a kid, then he wants to go with you, then he cries; that's what it means.

S: Yes.

Your mother's name—can you tell me what that was?

S: Well, I don't know her by her name, but Buena Johnson.

You don't know her by her Washo name?

S: Yes, that's the same thing.¹

Does that have a meaning to it?

S: No, it's just a name.

Did you know your grandparents? Were they still alive when you were a youth?

S: Yes. I never got to know my grandfather, but I got to know my grandmothers, both of them—my mother's mother and my father's mother.

Can you recall their names?

S: Jenny Johnson was my mother's mother and Sally Vedo was my father's mother.

Did either of them have Washo names that you can remember?

S: Yes, my father's mother's name was Bear, and my mother's mother's name was *Mahámi*.

Mahámi, and the other one was...?

S: Bear. The animal, you know.²

Marvin, you were telling me earlier that you were born out on the Settlemeyer ranch.

D: I was born April 3, 1919. Indians don't go by months. They go by fall, summer and winter and spring. So it must be spring because I was born April...on the rock field. They used to have people working making rock rows in the field, so they can pick it up. They get paid so much a field... you know, contract. So they were working there. That's when I was born there, at Settlemeyer's hay corral, someplace around there.

What was your mother's name?

D: My mother's name was Amelia Fred.

Did she have a Washo name?

D: Not that I know of. I don't remember because she died when I was born.

And your father—what was his name?

D: Harry.

Did you ever learn his Washo name?

D: They called him *Z,ínun*. I don't know what that is.

Can you remember any of your grandparents?

D: I know my grandma was Molly Dressler, but I don't know her Indian name. She died when I was pretty young.

She was your Lather's mother?

D: Yes. My grandfather was Henry Dressler, and his name was *Ná-baya*. I don't know what that was either. My grandmother on my mother's [side] was Kitty Dressler. And my grandfather, they called him Big Fred. His name was *De'm+mz+m*; means he got small hair under his nose! [laughter] That's about all I know.

I'm curious about why so many members of your family were named Dressler.

D: Well, see, a long time ago when white man hired some Indians, some of these Indians got names that you can't pronounce. Or some of them names that kind of.. .like, the bad names that... names of all kinds of bad things, you know. And some of them named by animal or birds or different things a long time ago. And they used to have marks on their hand or on their forehead or cheek or chin or whatever; they were known by their marks. Until later on, people worked for this person, this white man; and if they got a bad name or something, then they can't name him or can't pronounce their name, then they give them *their* name. That's what happened to mine, see.

My grandfather used to work for Bill Dressler, and they were both boys together. And he started to work there on that ranch, so Bill called my grandfather his brother. That's how come he give him *his* name—Dressler. See, that's how come we all got that name.

And how long did your grandfather work on that ranch?

D: Oh, he worked there a long time. I don't know... until I must have been real young, that time when he went to Settlemeyer. Then he worked for Settlemeyer all the time, year after year. See, he already got their name, Dressler, so Fred Settlemeyer didn't give him his name.³ But anyway, he worked there. That's how come, I guess, they were living in Laverone at first before I was born.⁴ Then after I was born, then they lived there.

We had everything. We had a house there, and we had a barn there; horses, cows, garden, apple, peaches, plum, pear—everything. An orchard, you know, garden right there, potato field right there. And we had everything.

We even had a big wine cellar, they called it. My father used to make wine or whiskey or whatever he knows how to make at that time. See, it was against the law for the Indians to get any liquor from the white man then, so he make his own.

What would he make it out of?

D: I don't know; he wouldn't let me come in there. He wouldn't let me: "You just stay out of here."

He was making it in the cellar?

D: Yes. And then he used to put that barrels and kegs underneath the house. There was a cellar like underneath the house where we used to live. He used to roll that keg down in there; sit there and drink and drink till he get drunk and can't walk. He didn't have to go to town to get drunk; he just stay home and get drunk! And that's about all, I guess....

Were any of the buildings that the Laverone family lived in still standing when you lived there?

D: Everything's the same as it was, but it's all gone now.

So you just moved into the same buildings the Laverones had lived in; is that correct? You never knew the Laverone family?

D: No, I didn't know who they were.

Did your father or grandfather ever talk about them?

D: No. They never mentioned to me who lived there before they did. But anyway, we had everything: we had the place there where we got a spring. You know, it was drinking water. Of course, you can't drink water when it's coming down off of the river or down along the irrigating ditch, because it'd be all no good; it'd be red with cow manure and all that stuff, you know, that comes in there. Then we used to drink that spring water all the time. And we got that pounding rock there that they used that to pitch acorn in.

To prepare the acorn, you had to go to California to get the acorn. And then you cracked them and peeled them and pounded in that thing with a rock. You pound then till they turn to powder, and then you cook it for about a couple of hours. And then when it's still boiling, you put them in the cold water, and then you turn like biscuit...little ones, you know? That's called acorn biscuit. Sometimes they cook it till they just boil soup. They call that acorn soup; they called it *dayášmi*. And the other one... that acorn biscuit is *megedí*. *dit*.

Your grandmother would make those?

D: Oh, yes. It was my grandmother and my aunt. I had 3 aunts, and they know how.

They were all living at the same place at Laverone?

D: They were all living in the same place, yes.

Would they use that big pounding rock every day?

D: No, not every day; just when we need to eat it. When they want to eat acorn, then they go pitch it.

And they do the same thing with the pine nut, too, but they use a rolling or a flat rock like that. You roll a stone in it to make the pine nut soup. You had to cook it first, like any other thing, and then peel it—like I said the acorn, the same thing. When it turn white, then you'll grind it till it turn powder. And then you don't have to cook that one; you just stir it up, you know. Of course, it's already cooked. You stir it up till it turn soup. You drink pine nut soup or either you can eat it just like that, you know...not grind up.

How long did you live there at Laverone?

D: As far as I can remember, I went away from there when I was maybe 12; I think I went to Stewart.

Did your grandparents stay there?

D: Yes, they stayed there while I went to school in Stewart. I didn't go to school at first; I went to their Indian hospital they had down there. See, like any other kids, why, I climb up a tree; and there was an oriole nest hanging there, and I was reaching for it, and that cottonwood tree broke. And I came down in 1929; I guess I broke my arm. And then 1930 I went to school in Stewart. And when I

came out in the spring when the school is out, I find out the people had been moved from Laverone to here.

To Dresslerville?

D: Dresslerville, yes, in 1930.

And then no Washos ever lived at Laverone again after that?

D: No, nobody lived there no more after that.

Did your grandparents have electricity there?

D: No electricity; just lantern, which they used for light; sometime candle.

Did they ever tell you any stories about the people who had occupied that land before you were born?

D: They never did talk about it. Nothing. See, that land, that Laverone, belonged to Settlemeyer, not Dresslers. That land used to belong to Settlemeyer. Now, Settlemeyer sold that. So, we never tried to move back; nobody's ever trying to move back. It's been the same as we left it.

Did your family have any tule huts, tule structures, there?

D: We had one right between the house and spring just over the hill a bit; we used to have one there. We use it either summer or winter. Either way it was nice and warm. It had this willows standing up like tepee, but they have a screen put around on the inside, and then they lay these tules on top. I think the butt end sticking up; I think it was like that,

so that when it rains or something, it don't go down. See, it just stays on top and rolls off the side.

Used to be nice and warm because we had the fire in the middle of the hut—cut a hole on top where the smoke goes out. You'd sleep in there, bed in there and all the way around. There's a fire in the middle, and then they got a bed around the edge of the wall.

How many people would sleep in there at one time?

D: You could have about 6 or 7 people in there. You know, lay in the beds like that, foot toward the fire, or else you're going to lay sideways all the way around.

When you were living in the tule hut, what would you be using the other structures for? You said that you had a house and a barn on that land, as well.

D: Well, we used that house to cook and eat, you know, or some people stayed there, too. Yes, they were living in there, too. Probably my aunts used to live in it while the old folks lived in the hut.. .nice, warm. And then my dad, I guess he used to live in there in that house. Yes, he don't go down to that wickiup stuff, you know.

Were there any other structures on the land?

D: Just that cellar along the orchard there. My dad used to make whiskey, wine or whatever. Used to haul some potatoes in there just.. .that's what he made—wheat and stuff. And he won't let me go in there in the cellar.

What did he have in the garden?

D: Oh, we had everything—corn, carrots, onions, beans and different other things; potato field across from that orchard there on flat. We had everything. And then they used to gather them up, and my dad used to put them in a cellar. Whenever they want to eat something, they go in there and get it. We had apples and peaches, plums and pear—stuff in there.

That orchard was left by the Laverones? Is it still there?

D: Yes. It's all dried up now.

Ted, can you remember anything about the place where you grew up, where you were a boy?

S: Not as much as he did, no. I didn't pay too much attention to it.

How long did you live out to the east of Minden? How old were you before you left that area?

S: Well, I must have been anywhere about 5 years old. See, my old man got to be a federal policeman in Reno.

An Indian policeman?

S: Yes, and they lived there.

What were his responsibilities? What did he have to do?

S: Well, he was a police patrolman. Of course, in them days they had more authority than these guys have here now. Can arrest a white man or nigger or whatever. Excuse me for saying nigger, but I mean colored. [laughs] And I went to school in Reno for a while, on or about 6 years old, maybe. Been there about

a year, I suppose. Then we moved back to Woodfords; that's where I spent the biggest part of my time.

After you moved back to Woodfords, what was your father doing?

S: He went to work for Heise Land and Livestock. Been there over 50 years—so he used to tell me. He took care of Diamond Valley most of the time after that.

When did you move back into Carson Valley? You and Marvin were pretty good friends, weren't you?

S: We used to walk quite a ways just to play, you know.

You would walk from Diamond Valley down to Laverone?

S: Yes, I would say from up the river. He'd go all the way up the river, stay up there overnight sometime and come back again. Usually, we walked together part way, and then he'd go the rest of the way and I'd go back.

Were there any other Indian families living nearby?

S: Why, there were all kinds of Indians around there. There was a guy in there in that center a while ago that used to play around with us. [The center to which Mr. Sallee refers is the Dresslerville Senior Center. We ate lunch there before doing the interview.] But he's kind of a funny guy; he don't like to answer questions like we do. Must be Jewish because he liked that money pretty good. He wants to get paid for saying something, you

know. But me.. I ain't much of a Jew; I'd say anything.

The 2 of you first met when? Can you remember when you [and Marvin] began to run around with each other?

S: ...Quite a while ago. I don't remember.

You said you were in Reno when you were 6.

S: Well, maybe it could even be before we went to school, because we don't know what school was. The fact is, when I went to school I didn't know how to talk English.

Did you ever come down to the Dresslerville colony? That had already been established; did you ever come visit down here?

S: Yes, my grandmother lived down here—my father's folks. Used to come down here every now and then.

I've been told by some other Washos that as soon as Dresslerville was created, a lot of Washo families that had lived out on the various ranches throughout the Carson Valley decided to move on to land here at Dresslerville, because they would have their own property. Out there, of course, they were living on someone else's land and could be moved at any time. Marvin was telling me his family moved here in 1930. when did yours decide to move into Dresslerville, or did they ever?

S: I don't know. They were already here when I started to remember them. See, they were living quite a ways down there, somewhere about where that road goes down the hill to that golf course—somewheres in the flat there; somewheres in the sagebrush.

When you 2 were boys—let's say in the 1920s and 1930s, when you were up to 20 years of age—you no doubt went into Gardnerville and Minden fairly frequently, didn't you?

S: Oh, yes.

Why don't you think back and tell me what you can remember about Gardnerville and Minden and about the relations between Washo Indians and the rest of the people who lived in those communities during that time, in the 1920s and 1930s. What would you do when you went to town?

S: Well, the only thing we could do was we were not to stay there over 10:00 at night. I always thought to myself, "Those people are prejudiced." We were to be out of town by 10:00, otherwise go to jail for 30 days or so.... So we had to be out of town—curfew.

Did you ever know anybody who did go to jail?

S: Well, there was quite a few of them used to. A guy would get somebody to buy him booze and get drunk and get left over; get caught and go to jail for it. I can't think quite who, but a lot of them used to. That's all I can remember.

What would you do when you went to town?

S: Go to see a movie; they had a movie house. we would play around in the back. They had an old jail at the back of the town. That was where they gathered most of the time. Right around the jail there they'd play cards, and sometimes they'd play hand game—they called it hand game. There would be a lot of money involved in either game—a card game or hand game, either or both. I

played in them. Them Basque people were more friendly to us than the Germans was. Some old Basques would go back there when they were playing hand game; they'd bet on one side or the other, you know? If they'd lose, they'd laugh about it. [laughs] If they win, why, they're just winners, you know. Yes, we used to play with those Basque kids there.

Can you remember some of the names of the Basque kids you played with?

S: Well, Raymond Borda.. .the Borda family—the French Hotel, you know. And Ted Bergevin. About all I remember.

Of course, Basques had their own games.

S: Yes, there used to be a handball court down there too. Used to watch them guys.. .eee, them guys must have hard hands! And hit the darn thing! [laughter] A regular baseball, you know? Sound like somebody hitting a baseball with a baseball bat. They must have had pretty strong hands.

Did any Washos play the game?

S: Not that I know of.

That's that fronton that they had at the French Hotel...handball court there?

S: Yes, right in the back.

Did the Washos bet on the Basque games?

S: No, that was left quite a bit up to the Basques themselves, I liked to watch them, but not very many of us. Used to be pretty friendly with Raymond Borda and Pete Borda, Maria Borda. She was a regular tomboy, the girl.

D: Etchemendy.

S: Yes, Joe Etchemendy and them.

Did you know Frank Yparraguirre back then?

S: Yes, we knew him, but he was quite older than us already, you know. He's an old man now; I know he was a lot older than us. He was a Basque and he was pretty good to us, mostly. But them Germans, they're somebody else again! You know, they.... You'd have to be out of town by 10:00 or else.

Is that both Minden and Gardnerville that you had to be out of town?

S: Oh, yes; they were both the same way.

What was going on down in Minden? Anything happening there that is worth telling me about?

S: Only thing, the train comes in; that's all. Now, that was a great event! I can remember people come in spring wagons, come even from Woodfords, just to see the train pull in.

These are Washo people who would come?

S: Yes, them. Some people have horses, spring wagon, buggy or whatever. They'd go down there just to see the old train puff in.

What would they do once the train came in?

S: They'd watch it. They were surprised by it somehow or other.

Did they sell any baskets down there or sell anything else to the people on the trains?

S: No, not that I remember.. .but they apparently did.

You've been telling me about Basque handball courts and the Indian gambling games. Were there any sports that the Washo boys participated in?

S: Yes, they had their own football game. I used to see that. That's something similar to that Australian rules football, like you see on television now and then. They grab each other and pull each other down hard, and they held each other down. They were relatives, you know, one side to the other—good friends or relatives; that's how they pick up their gang. They was there to beat the other and grab people up, you know.

What was the ball made out of?

S: Well, anything that was round. They made their own balls somehow. I don't know, maybe they bought it in the store for all I know. Anyway, it was kind of a hard ball, but they'd kick it. They don't grab it, but they had to kick it.

How big was the field? Or would just any field do?

S: Something similar to a football.... Then they'd have a goal there, and they'd kick it through there. They can't throw it to them, but they have to kick it through. [At this point Mr. Sallee described with gestures a goal approximately 4 feet wide with a semicircular face 4 feet high at its center.]

And this is an old Washo game that was played before the white man came here?

S: Yes.

Then the girls would have a game they called stick game. Women at Walley's [Hot Springs] used to play that. They'd get a hoop

made out of rag, weaved, which is maybe about [2 feet in diameter]. Then they got a stick, and they'd throw it... throw that to each other with a stick. They don't grab that either; they had to use a stick all the time. And that field was something similar to a football field, too. Now, that's about the only thing I know about our games.

Marvin, some people have been telling me about a Chinese family in Gardnerville that had a restaurant.

D: Yes, there used to be a restaurant back there— place called Joyland. It was right there next to [where Magoo's Pizza is now]. They used to have a restaurant there, and the white people can go in the restaurant to eat, but the Indians can't go in there...eat with the white people. So they used to feed the Indians in the back. Eat outside along the pole piles there and stuff, until this Wallace Yim—he's the boss of that restaurant there—he started to make a gambling house in the back of the restaurant. Then he add on an addition there. They put tables and chairs and everything in there, and the Indian can eat in the back, not in the front where the white people eat.

So they have them separated like that. And then they treat those Indians pretty good there, by feeding them inside instead of feeding them on the outside; but they won't let you go in the front. Until some of these people [Washo men] went to the army [during World War II] and they came back and they went in the front to eat, you know, and some people didn't like it. And they told them—he says, "Indians supposed to eat back there, not in here."

"Who are you?" he says. He says, "I went to service, just like you did. I got a right to eat here, just as much as you do." So they started

eating in the front with the white people. They don't say no more.

So, that's about the size of the story I know about that restaurant down there—those Chinese people. And they are pretty good people still, pretty good. Only one guy there now—this Wallace Yim.

I'm wondering about some other places that Washos may have gathered.

D: They used to gather right there around by the ditch just west of the telephone office. There used to be telephone office right there next to the restaurant. And straight back there there's a ditch there. They used to gather there; play hand game and card game and every other thing.. And then they play hand game and card game over there by the jailhouse where Ted was mentioning where those Basque people play handballs and stuff. And so I used to be in there, too, watching the people play hand game and playing cards. I was pretty small.. .not too small, though, but naughty, just like the rest of them! [laughter]

When did all that stop? You don't see Washos in town any more like that.

D: They come to that when they start sending those people out of town. He said 10:00, but I was pretty sure they sent them out of town already 6:00. Yes, at 6:00 you can't hang around town any more, *unless* you're going to a show. But if you're going to a show, you have to have your parents with you to go to a show and stuff. Some older kids, they would sneak in all right. But then everybody would sort of let you hang around there after the show. So we used to walk home at nights after show; and it's the only way we would

get around is walk. So you walk nighttime; come home.

Did either of you ever know Susie Dick?

D: Yes, I know her. They used to call her Susie Dangberg because she lived there, yes.

Where did she live?

D: Right there where them willows are... Ted was talking— back there east of Minden. That...what's that guy's name? I forgot his name now, that *Mášgut*. Willy Dick's dad.

S: Sammy.

D: Sam Dick. Yes. That's about all I know.

They called her Susie Dangberg?

D: Yes, they used to call her Susie Dangberg. She used to walk from town all the way up here with a sack of grocery on her back, and pack something else back down on her back. She's walking from Minden to here [Dresslerville] and from here to Minden, as old as she was. Sometimes she bakes a cake and takes it to the jailhouse to the people she know that's in jail, you know.

Like Ted said a while ago, see, they never used to have that many officers as they got now. They probably got about 15 or 20 and those deputies and every other thing. Only one that used to run town was John Brown and Bill Parks. And I don't know who was the judge then.

S: Mason Krummes.

D: Yes, I guess so.

S: Mason Krummes was an old man—an old white man.

Was he pretty tough on Washos?

D: I didn't know him.

S: I didn't know him too well either. You know, I was pretty young. I guess he put Washos in jail all the time down there—that old jail, you know. Very seldom see a white man in there.

D: When I was growing up, start getting into troubles and stuff like that, get picked up even by walking, you know—go to jail. We had one judge down there called Selkirk. He was an old man. He was a tough, old man. He used to say, "How do you plead—guilty or not guilty?" Then if you're guilty, you're guilty. He said, "You're in jail, ain't you? Then you are guilty. If you're not guilty," he says, "you'd be outside."

Then I told him, I said, "Well, I didn't do anything. I just walk out, and guys pick me up, and cop come along." I said, "They pick us up, and I'm here."

Then he says, "Well, you don't have to do a thing. Just be there get you in trouble." That's what he used to say.

Did you get picked up often?

D: Oh, I never drink when I was young. I smoke a lot but never drink. And like I say, I start walking or something on the highway maybe, and cop come along and pick me up; haul me back down or something. I got so used to that.

I got drunk one time. I drove right down in there and parked the car, and I walked

in. I says, "Well, I'm here. I'm drunk. You'll have to lock me up, I guess." So they put me in jail and turned me out 6:00 next morning. [laughter] I got to where I put myself in jail instead of them come and get me.

Where were you getting whiskey? Was this after the Second World War?

D: Oh, see, it was against the law for white man to get any liquor at all. So we find some white man that's kind of hungry or something, you know, and give him a dollar or 2 extra and tell him to get us a bottle. Then he goes and get a bottle; he set it someplace, and he tell us where it is, and then we go pick it up. That way they can't catch us, see.

Was there any bar here in the Carson Valley that would sell liquor to Indians?

D: No, not that time, until it must have been around about 1952, 1953, they turn the liquor loose to the Indians.⁵ Then you see people all over in the bars. That time already I lived in Alturas then—when they turn that liquor loose; everybody was drinking then.

If either of you can remember any of the traditional ways of living that were still being practiced while you were young in the 1920s and 1930s, I'd like to hear about them—and particularly things that were being done in your own families.

S: Well, most of my family went to the happy hunting ground. In fact, you might say I'm the only one now. They all practiced the same thing, you know. They were basically the same; all the families were families. There was no difference.

Were rabbit drives still an important part of the culture in the 1920s and 1930s?

S: Yes. Still is.

D: Still is today.

You are a rabbit boss, aren't you, Marvin?

D: That's the one I was talking about the other day on that tape.⁶ Yes. It's the same thing. And today, people still go out and hunt rabbit. They start out with maybe 5, 10, 15, 20 and end up 100 people sometimes. And they line up at shooting distance. That's about all they do with the.... See, these white people have homes all over now where we used to hunt, ride, drive rabbits and stuff. They tell you not to hunt there, because you can't shoot a mile from the housing and stuff like that.

When you were young, where was the best place to hunt rabbits?

D: We go hunt out there in the sagebrush—that's about the only place; you don't go out there in the Pine Nut Hills. There's not very many rabbits out there anyway. Out here in the flat next to the alfalfa fields, and that's about all where we hunt rabbits.

That was right here next to Dresslerville, then?

D: Yes.

A man by the name of Mike Holbrook, before he died, we'd sit down out there, and he used to talk. He told me, "Pretty soon, we won't be living here in Dresslerville. The white man going to have houses from down here and on this way. They're going to start building houses... inside a month or 2 you're going to see 100 houses, maybe more—300,

400, 500 houses." He says, "All this place up this way, past Dresslerville, going to be houses, always there. You can't hunt there no more, because they won't let you hunt. And people are going to start moving in here," he says, "getting next to the Washos. And some of these Washos won't like it, and then they're going to move out there in the hills in their own Pine Nut land and stuff; they're going to live out there, and we'll all be chased out in the Pine Nut Hills into them rocks."

He said that one time, and I didn't believe him then, what he said. He kind of talked foolish, you know, and he'd laugh and joke and stuff. But he told that to me, and I didn't believe it then. But see, after he passed away, first house I'd seen was over that top of the hill. Dr. T. V. Ross, I think, was the first house there. Then pretty soon next house, next house; before I know it was 10 houses, 15, 20 houses all along through there to start. Now is the houses over there and up—the Ranchos is ending right here straight across from Dresslerville, all the way across to Tillman Lane and up to Snake Hill. There's a place there now.

I believe what he said, you know, after I see it. And I've seen these people...some of these people are living out there yet [in the Washo Pine Nut allotments to the southeast]. That Manson Henry.. he passed away, but his wife is still out there. Tommy Smokey's out there and Garfield Frank's out there in the hills. And I don't know; Reed's trying to move out there, too, now. See, I don't know how many people are going to be out there in the Pine Nut Hills. Now they got these new houses [1983-1984 federal housing project] up here in Dresslerville; I guess that stops it all—nobody's going to move any more from here, the way these houses are coming up. And they say they're going to order for some more houses coming in, so that's how it is.

Have you spent much time roaming the Pine Nuts back there?

D: No.

What about you, Ted? Have you ever spent any time back there?

S: Not really.

I've talked to other, older people who have told me a lot about gathering pine nuts back in the Pine Nut Hills. They tell me that very often they'll make a big mound of green pine nuts and set fire to them in order to make them open up, so they can get the nuts out.

D: Yes.

Now, I went back there with another fellow one day, a white man who's an archaeologist [Dr. Gene Hattori of the Desert Research Institute] and we found great circles of charcoal throughout the Pine Nuts back there. We thought that's where wood burners had made charcoal to sell to Virginia City. Some people tell us they think that's where the Washo had built mounds of pine nuts and burned them. Do either one of you know anything about that?

D: Yes....

Have you ever seen those big circles back there?

D: First they gather brushes, you—kind of green brushes. They pile it up maybe 3 feet high and about 4 feet in diameter—round, you know—and then they make kind of hole like on top. Then they dump the pine nut on top of it and make a big mound and then light it. After they light it, the fire goes down to where the pine nut burns pretty heavy, pretty hot, you know.

They get a long pole, until the.... When the brushes burn down, pine nut all went down with the charcoal and everything. They get that stick and they stir it and stir those charcoals out from underneath there. Then they push the dirt together with a shovel, and they make a big pile of dirt, ashes and everything until the pine nut is cooked. Then they open it up, and they start taking those pine nuts out. Of course, some open up and some of them is not open, so they open it with the hand and take the pine nuts out. They call that *pumsé-k*.

They call the pine nut pumsé-k when they get it out, or the process...?

D: No, the whole thing, like when they're cooking it, yes. They call it *desé-gi'*. It's roasted or whatever— in charcoal.

Which kind of pine nuts are the best—the ones that are roasted from the green pine cones or the ones that are ripe and fall out of the brown pine cones?

D: The ones that fall out on the ground and roasted in charcoal.

D: They call that *dayó-baši'*. They're the best. You make pine nut soup out of that. But this other *desé-gi'*, you eat that when you just peel off the shell. They're white inside.

Well, tell me, have you ever gone deer hunting up there, or have you ever tramped around in the Pine Nut Range?

D: Oh, yes.

Have you seen these big circles I'm talking about up there?

D: Yes, I know what they are.

Is that made by the pine nuts?

D: Yes, well, made by the people....

By Indian people.

D: Yes, the Washos. Well, there is the Paiute come across from the other side, and they do that, too. They do the same thing.

Did you ever hear of any white people making charcoal up there?

D: No.

S: They said that they used to have Chinese out there.

What have you heard about that?

S: The Chinese would make charcoal in a certain place, mostly around Mineral Mountain there. That's where you probably will see them—great big places where you see charcoals and stuff maybe as big as this room. Too big of a place for them to cook pine nuts. But the Chinks were making charcoal.

D: Coal.

S: Coal or whatever it is, you know, they'd ship somewhere.

Who told you this? You learned this from...?

D: That was just a story about what's going on.

S: A story.

D: Yes, years ago.

You heard this from other Washo people, or did white people tell you this?

S: Well, Washo people, the old-timers. That's where lots of people got introduced to... they call it "Chinese gin," you know.

No, what's that?

S: That's something to drink, like gin. That's what it is—gin—only they call it Chinese gin. Yes, and they had to introduce... *yenshee* and stuff like that, you know, dope. That's something they smoked—the Chinese.

D: *Sayni'bagku*. [Literally, "Chinese tobacco."]

S: It would make you dream about funny things that's not there, you know. So they say; I don't know; I never did try them! [laughing]

The Washo people would meet Chinese people out in the Pine Nuts?

S: Well, usually in Carson [City]...there was a regular Chinatown there in Carson. I remember that. We used to go down there and eat something a while. See, the Chinese always had great restaurants and stuff. But it used to kind of scare me because the way they dressed, you know—black dress and black clothes and the long hair. I remember that a little bit. Used to scare me; I had no use for them!

There weren't very many Chinese here, were there, in Minden and Gardnerville?

S: By then, I guess they....

D: They're modern people; I guess they dress just like a white man.

S: Oh, there was 2 or 3 restaurants around.

I was talking this morning with Bernice Auchoberry. She was telling me about Double Spring Flats. She said that her grandparents had told her that that's where most of the Washo used to gather every year for the dance that they would hold prior to going out and collecting pine nuts. Have the 2 of you ever been told any stories about Double Spring Flats? Do you know anything about it?

D: No.

S: There's a Indian story which goes on and on, forever.

D: Well, different ones have different....

S: Different versions of that story

Can one of you tell me a version of it now?

S: Well, I've forgot now.

Do you remember one, Marvin?

D: Not that I know of. Only place I know where they say that Indian used to live and gather around... the other side of Dangberg Hill or someplace, they call it 'má·š títel. That's where the Indian used to live—"big land." That's Hot Spring Hill, across this east side on this side of Stewart.

S: Yes. This side of the prison, there. It was right there directly east of that Cradlebaugh bridge.⁷

D: People back then, they lived there. And they go pick pine nut from there, different places. See, they don't call it *their* land; they call it 'má·š. It means they got a share

in there where they can pick. See, different Indian, different Washos, they have different 'má·š, like different land where they pick... the picking area. So if you go to their picking area where you're not supposed to be, they'll fight you—break up your pole, your basket; spill your pine nuts and whatever, unless you are related; then you can pick either side, you know.

Is that still true today?

D: Well, not now. Anybody can pick now—white man, Paiute, Shoshone, whatever. They pick along through all them hills now.

What about when you were a boy? Was it still true then, that you had your own 'má·š?

D: No. Well, I don't remember that. But they had this trouble like that out there. We used to just go out there and camp and pick pine nut, trying to camp as far away from another camp that we could—mostly up here at the Leviathan mine; a place called *cuhu'mayú·k*. That's where we used to pick pine nut. *Cuhu'mayú·k* means "stick scatterer". Had a bunch of stick scattered, laying around all over.

And you say that's near the Leviathan mine?

D: Yes. On this side is a pine nut hill there, where people pick pine nut. There're several camps out there usually, and a lot of them this other way.

I'm very much interested in that place you're talking about in the northeastern corner of Carson Valley. I went there once. We walked around it last year, and we found a lot of things that indicated that it was a settled area. Is this near the hot springs?

D and S: Yes.

D: There used to be a lot of rocks and... Indian rocks— what they call *‘lá·m*, “mortar,” you know, and that grinding stone and rollers.

Is it what’s called a bícik?

D: Yes, *bícik*. And *gámun* and *‘itdémge*’ and everything there. It’s hidden there. some people buried it, or they just covered over. Wind cover over, you know; you can’t find them. But these people across here [at Washo Tribal Council headquarters], they ask me to go along with them down there and find the place and find those rocks and put them up for exhibit and stuff to show. [laughter] I told them, “No, no, not me,” I said. “If you want to go get it, go get it, because I’m not going to mess around with that.” see, Indian belief is never to touch the dead people’s belongings. Either you’ll get sick or get crippled or whatever. So they don’t bother their people’s... what they left or what they put away, see, after they die. The people put it away after they die or something, never to touch it.

And the Washos don’t believe in having feathers...put feather in their head, in their hair, or around their hats and stuff, like Paiutes and Shoshone do, because they respect that eagle pretty good. Only one that can have the feathers is a kind of Indian doctor or dreamer or somebody that smoke, you know, and pray for you. The praying man or something like that. They’re the only one that can handle the eagle feather. If you’re going to have to handle that feather, you’ll have to have one of those Indian doctors to pray for you and pray for the feather, so you can have it in your possession. And you have to treat it like it was alive— give it water

every 4 months or 4 weeks or every 4 days or whatever; 4 to each one, you know.

Is 4 a very important number?

D: Yes. You get sick if you don’t take care of it like you should. If the Indian doctor tell you to water it, talk to it so many times a month or so many times a year, that’s what you got to do. Otherwise you have to leave it alone. See, the Washos never believe in bothering with a feather.

And even the rattlesnake...those rattles, they never touch them; it’s just kind of dangerous. You’ll get sick with that if one of your family or any of your people—the old people, maybe, or some people that’s kind of lame, crippled or something—they get worse if you got it and don’t take care of it, you know. So they never bother to mess with those kind. *Unless* Paiute people...they do it. They take the rattler off, put in on their hair or their hat or put it on their shirt—pin it on, walk around. And they say never to count those rattlers—the numbers. How many rattlers he’s got, never to count them.

Bad luck?

D: Yes.

I understand that the Paiute people did not get along very well with the Washo people in times past.

D: Well, they had a few arguments about different things, but I guess they don’t do that any more. Of course, there’s a whole mess of half-breed Paiutes, half-breed Shoshones or half-breed different people like Navajos now, you know, since people going to Stewart school, this and that, you

know. Stewart was the Washo's school, but they have Paiute and Shoshone and different other people that's going to school there. That's why it is called Wa-pa-shon, for Washo, Paiute, Shoshone.

I've heard that maybe the Washos and the Paiute once had a war to decide who would ride horses.

D: I don't know about that.

Some Paiutes say that that's how they ride horses today and the Washo do not. Of course, Washos do ride horses now, but for some time I understand they didn't. Did your grandparents ever tell you any stories about a war between the Washo and the Paiute?

D: No.

And you either, Ted?

S: No.

Both of you worked on the Dressler ranch at one time, didn't you?

D: Well, I never have; I worked on Settlemeyer ranch. Many time I pass Dressler ranch. There used to be old folks there; some relatives lived there. So I used to visit there and stay there.

Who was that?

D: Edna Coleman and 'Ámbi George; Norman George, Lá·man George, Hó·ni and all them people; they used to live there. They're all gone now.

They were all related to you?

D: Yes. So I used to come down there and spend a night or 2, maybe a week; then go back home. See, the relatives— they used to cook there, and then pay 50¢ and you get whole big dishpan full of food and a big tomato can gallon of tea and pie...everything, for 50¢ a long time ago.

At the Dressler ranch?

D: Yes.

From the Dresslers themselves?

D: Yes.

Out of their kitchen there?

D: Yes.

Who was that doing it? Was that Fred's wife, or was it Bill Dressler and his wife?

D: Well, Fred's wife. After Bill was gone, I guess.

So it'd be Anna Dressler, then, who used to do that?

D: Well, Bill was alive here lately. [William Dressler died in 1946.] I knew Bill. He was cremated, you know; they put him up in Job's Peak. He told Dúwa Johnson, "You better work, because I'll be watching you every day." He says, "I'll be on top of that hill, so...." Dúwa Johnson used to work from daylight to sundown. Never quits.

Working on Dressler land?

D: Yes.

Did the Dresslers treat the Washos pretty well?

D: Yes. Every time you go over there, give you something to eat. Even now he [Fred Dressler] tell me some time go over there and have some *ba·ga'bú·lǎ·daš*—is bull meat.

You worked for Fred Dressler, didn't you, Ted?

S: Yes. I don't know too much about the other Washos, but I got along pretty good with old Fred.

When did you start working there?

S: I don't know, exactly. It's been about 10, 12 years back. I know he's a pretty good guy; he's about the best I get along with. He didn't bother nobody; I mean, he tells you what to do, and he expects you to do it—leaves you alone. That's one of the best things about old Fred, because he expects you to do a good job; he don't want no haphazard job. He treated *me* all right, you know. Of course, I don't know about the rest of these Indians that would work.

I'm kind of curious as to which ranch is the best ranch for Washos to work on in the Carson Valley. Has anybody ever talked about that when you were young?

S: Well, they were all about the same. Everybody had their own favorite bosses. Like me: when I was a youngster, I worked for Heise myself —Heise brothers out here by Centerville. That's where I started working.

Does Fred speak Washo?

S: Yes, fluently.

D: Oh, yes.

He speaks it well enough so everybody can understand?

S: Oh, yes. He can talk to me. See, I could drive for him, after he had a heart attack. Want to go to Reno or Bridgeport or someplace, I could drive the vehicle for him. And he'd get in the back and go to sleep; tell me where he want to go, you know. By the time I get there, I'd wake him up. Out at Bridgeport, I'd tell him, "Well, we're here." The first thing he want to do there is go to the cafe and have a cup of coffee and doughnut or something.. .because you never go hungry driving for that guy! [laughter] Then noontime come along, why, that's something else; you could eat whatever you want, and he pays for it. He talks good Washo and everything like that. Pretty nice old man to get along with.

He told me a story about a group of rocks that's back behind his property.

S: *Páša páwdi'*. It's along the valley up here.

What do the 2 of you know about that?

S: *Páša páwdi'* means that the wood rat fell over the hill there. That's an Indian story; now I don't know the story. What do you say, maybe he do.

Do you know the story, Marvin?

D: No, I don't know. I heard about the place, but I never hear about it. There's different places like that down in the valley they call that...on this side of this end. They call that *deyú·gel'*; *k'iláhat*. Means pine nut soup.

S: Ridge?

D: Yes, pine nut soup ridge.

Do you know any stories about the Carson Valley before the white man came? I understand

there's a big kind of rocky scar behind Genoa. There's a big place up there that is all bare rocks; and there's supposed to be some story about that, but I don't know what the story is.

S: Something had pulled brushes there for some reason. I don't know that really, but something hide there. If you want to find it, you pull a lot of brush away, so the brush never did come back and grow there no more. That's about all I know about that.

I was told them stories when I was a kid, but like every other kid I thought I'd know it forever. You know, I just didn't write it down or nothing. See, the old Indians, when they tell you the story, he says, "You never want to sit down and listen." He said, "Lay down. Lay down in your bed sideways or whatever, in the best position, you know, and listen." I never did hear the end of it. I'm asleep. [laughing] That was the main purpose of them stories.

D: Yes.

S: They never tell a story in the daytime, either.

D: Then they ask you in the morning, "What did I say last night?" Huh! I don't know, see? You never hear the end of it. You hear part of it.

And that way you can keep telling the same story night after night?

D: Yes.

Both of your families were still using some natural material for food and for building when you were younger. I'd like to know where they got these things. Let's start with tule reeds that they used to build their wickiups. Ted, did you

ever live in a wickiup, or did your grandparents live in one?

S: No, I never did, except maybe out in the Pine Nut Hills. They'll make shade out of kind of like a wickiup with a canvas. But those using tules, well, that's beyond my time.

Marvin, you said you lived in one for a while. Was there a particularly favorite tule reed gathering place here in the valley?

D: No. See, once you build them you can't take it apart or can't do anything unless you're going to rebuild them. Then you can pull those old tules down and build new ones on top of that again—rebuild, just like you were fixing another house. But it's the same thing like these they got now. A lot of these people, they believing about this sweat house? You know, the.. .you can't tear it down. Only one that can tear them down is the one that built it, otherwise it's no good; it's bad luck to you if you tear it down when you're not supposed to, see. So.. .it's the same thing, like I said a while back. I lived in those tule wickiups. A winter house, they call that. They call it *gális dāngal*. This white man now talking about water bed, and they're talking about this seat belt. I think I was the first guy that ever invented water bed and seat belt: when you wet your bed, my dad give me a spanking on the seat! That's why I says I was the first guy that ever invented water bed and seat belt long before the white man ever mentioned water bed and seat belt. [laughing]

You ate elderberries, too, didn't you, when you were younger?

D: You can't eat them straight.

Yes, but jelly...?

D: You got to mix it with the peaches, apple or whatever, you know. It's too bitter, and you just can't eat it straight.

Where was the best place to gather elderberries?

D: Along Genoa, I think, you get them. Oh, I guess you can make straight elderberry jam.

S: It takes a lot of sugar, though. I never made them, but I seen my mother used to make them.

D: I was thinking about buckberries, wouldn't you say that? You can't even put that in your mouth, it's so bitter. But elderberry, you could.

You were hunting rabbits around here in the sagebrush out behind Dresslerville, getting elderberries over next to Genoa, pine nuts in the Pine Nut Ridge over to the east.

D: Yes.

Was anything going on in the northern end of the valley? We were talking earlier about those hot springs that are up in the northeastern part of the valley where that large Washo encampment used to be. In your lifetime was that area ever used for anything by the Washos?

D: I don't think so.. .no, never was used.

S: That was before my time.

D: Yes, that place called Hobo Hot Spring, that's on the west side. That was the Indian hill. I remember that; there used to be an Indian used to live there. Some Indians used to live there a long time ago. And on the east side, I don't remember anybody's ever used that.

We were going to go there one time. They got a little pond over there, but the water is so hot you can't even put your foot in the water. And they said that you can't take a bath in that water because those Indians died back there— a whole bunch of them.

Yes, right there where I call that '*mas tiyel*', that's where the Indians used to live. something grow there one time, and a lot of people died there. That's where they got this Indian rocks and everything that some people like to get at. Some people already living there and stuff. So you can't use that hot spring that's there. Well, maybe white man can; see, they have different blood than we got... different from Indian blood. They have a belief against using that water for baths or anything.

They used to go across over to the west side in a place called Hobo Hot Spring. That's where a lot of people used to go and swim and stuff there, you know. If you got a sore or you got rheumatism or something, you get in that water several times, maybe you get a little better or something like that—some mineral water or something that's out of there that makes you feel better. I don't know about getting well with it, but I know you get well there with your sores or whatever you got on your leg or wherever you got sore, they fall off. You don't have any more, see; it'd heal in that water.

*You said that something grew over in '*mas tiyel*'.*

D: Yes. I don't know what they were that they grow there, and some people that lived there. That's why they don't want to have anybody touching nothing over there— that Indian rocks and stuff, you know.

How long ago was that?

D: Oh, it way before my time.

Before the white man?

D: Yes. Well, I guess there was white man, too, then. Of course, this Johnny Frank used to mention where he came there, and he was an Indian doctor and kind of power man. He said he went and talked with somebody and prayed for them, and in spirit he said that he went to heaven and wanted to come back. See, he know what heaven and happy hunting ground look like, so he used to tell me about that. But sometime... some way didn't like to tell it the way heaven or the happy hunting ground really look like. But he said people from here go there; it's a place of no return. People cross the river, and you never come back.

And that's where the people from 'mas tiyel all went?

D: Yes. Just like the Bible says, you got to cross the river; you can't cross the river alone. Somebody got to reach across to get you, catch hold of your hand. And you go across the river and you never come back. But if somebody reach for you, and then you hold your hand back, maybe you did and you fall off or fail in a ditch or fall in a river. Then you come back to yourself, come alive again. See, you don't go on the other side. That's the old Indian belief.

Are there any other places here in the Carson Valley that are like that place where the spring is? Any other places here in the Carson Valley where many Washo used to live but no longer do?

D: Not that I know.

Any large gathering grounds? I was told by a white person over in Genoa that he thought there was a large Washo Indian gathering ground to the south.

D: I heard about that, but I don't know why. I don't know anything about it. A lot of people in Genoa and over here at Sheridan; that's why it's called that Indian Road, and I don't know what else. There's quite a bit of places there along the foothill.

And what would you use the foothills for? Did Washos ever hunt deer up there, is that it?

D: They lived there. I guess they live certain place. They live where they're working for some people, or they live together and they go from there to where they're working, back and forth. They go in the buggies or horseback or even walk.

We've covered a lot of topics today. Is there anything that either one of you would care to add to this before we call it a day? Are there any questions I should have asked and failed to?

S: Not that I know of.

I think we've learned a lot about the Washos in the twentieth century in this valley, anyway. You've told me a great deal about how life was here. I've gotten more information from other people. When we put it all together, we'll have a pretty good picture of what it was like to live here from the beginning of this century up to the present. Thanks very much for your time.

S: That's all right.

NOTES

1. The name in question may be a Washo name that is phonetically similar. It would be orthographically represented as *B+yna*.

2. Although Mr. Sallee said to spell the name B-e-a-r, it may be more accurately represented as *Béya*.

3. Fred Settlemeyer states that Henry Dressler worked for his family for more than 50 years. Mr. Settlemeyer was born in 1892, and Henry Dressler was already a Settlemeyer hand at that time.

4. Laverone refers to the site of the Laverone (spelled various ways) homestead in the extreme southern end of the Carson Valley. In 1984 the property was owned by Fred Dressler, but it had passed through several other hands over the years. For a lengthy period it was part of the Settlemeyer ranch.

5. H.R. 1055 (Public Law 277) of 15 August 1953, an act to eliminate certain discriminatory legislation against Indians,

repealed the federal prohibition against sale of alcohol to Indians.

6. The UNR Oral History Program has in its collection a videotape of Marvin Dressler discussing the rabbit drive.

7. The site is adjacent to a marsh at the northeastern end of the Carson Valley.

PHOTOGRAPHS



Washo women gambling at the hand game, probably behind the Krummes blacksmith shop in Gardnerville, ca. 1910.



Washo eating a pan meal behind the Dressler Ranch House, ca. 1910.



Washo in front of the tule gális dánal (winter house), ca. 1910.

Photographs courtesy of Special Collections, University of Nevada, Reno Library. First photograph from Lorenzo Creel collection. This page, top, Fred Dressler collection; bottom, Lorenzo Creel collection.

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